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**From:** editor@mountainwestnews.org  
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Southeast Montana

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Mountain West News is a  
program of the  
O'Connor Center for the Rocky  
Mountain West at  
The University of Montana

**Friday,**  
**Oct. 9, 2015**

Produced by Shellie Nelson, MW News Editor

[Mountain West Voices](#)

### Editor's notes:

Mountain West News' online fall fund-raiser is ending today, although readers can chose to support our news-gathering service at any time, by clicking on the ["Support"](#) button in the lefthand column of our website.

We not only round up the news of the West on a daily basis, we also offer our [Western Perspective](#) to folks who what on weigh in on issues of the region.

Cleanup of inactive and abandoned mines to protect the waters the West, community-owned stores, reform of the Endangered Species Act, and the role of public lands in Western states' economies are just some of the issues addressed in the column since 2002.

Since 2010, we've offered ["On the Bookshelf,"](#) featuring reviews of books of interest in the region.

Tim Egan's "The Big Burn," Robert Glennon's "Unquenchable: America's water crisis and what to do about it," Andrew Nikiforuk's "Empire of the Beetle," and Douglas Emlen's "Animal Weapons," are some of the books reviewed.

In our [A Look Ahead column](#), we offer a place for groups and organizations to promote upcoming conferences and events.

We are asking our readers to please help us continue providing a daily snapshot of what's happening in the region, as well as more in-depth examination of regional issues in Western Perspective, our reviews in On the Bookshelf and the previews in A Look Ahead.

Please consider making a donation today, either [online](#) through our secure server, or through the mail, using this [form](#).

Barbara Theroux reviews [three books that examine the West's](#)

### Mountain West

Montana's two-year colleges  
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Thank you for your attention, consideration and support.

### Quote of the day:

"They are getting a generous credit for the energy they produce. This is not about generating revenue. The object is to correct the subsidy inside the residential class. Net-metered customers are reducing their bills to the point they are not paying for the poles and wires. It's purely a rate-fairness issue."

Dave Eskelsen, a spokesman for Rocky Mountain Power, speaking before the Utah Public Service Commission on why the [utility is seeking a fee for its customers who get credit for solar-generated power fed back into the grid.](#)  
- Salt Lake Tribune

## Rockies today

### U.S. railroad agency turns attention to tracks to prevent accidents

After discovering that one-third of all train accidents are caused by broken tracks, the Federal Railroad Administration will request that railroads conduct more detailed track inspections and increase training for those who do the inspections.

New York Times; October 9

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### Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals blocks Clean Water Act rule in all states

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's rule to clarify the waters of the United States to which the Clean Water Act applies was put on hold in August by a federal judge in North Dakota in the 13 states in the lawsuit over which he was presiding, and trial judges in similar lawsuits had opposing views about the effect of the North Dakota ruling, but on Friday, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati ruled that the rule was on hold across the nation.

Wall Street Journal; October 9

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### Mine spill at 2nd Colorado mine where EPA was working renews criticisms

An Environmental Protection Crew working to install a bulkhead plug on the Standard Mine above Crested Butte on Tuesday released an estimated 2,000 gallons of contaminated water into Coal Creek, which provides the bulk of water to the Colorado community, and again questions were raised about the EPA's communication with community officials about the spill. Colorado U.S. Rep. Scott Tipton and state Attorney General Cynthia Coffman, both of whom were highly critical of the EPA's work that triggered the much-larger spill from the Gold King Mine in August, again spoke out about the agency.

Denver Post; October 9



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## U.S. House panel advances bill to open Wyoming parks' waters to paddling

On a 23-15 vote on Thursday, the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources sent Wyoming U.S. Rep. Cynthia Lummis' bill to open stretches of water in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks to hand-propelled watercraft to the full House. Montana U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke was among those who voted to approve the measure.

Montana Public Radio (AP); October 9

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## Judge orders USFS to make decision on Montana leases by Nov. 23

The federal government has until Nov. 23 to decide whether the leases held by Louisiana-based Solenex on the Badger-Two Medicine area of Montana considered sacred by the Blackfeet Nation are canceled.

Montana Public Radio (MTPR.org); October 9

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## Idaho DWR denies application for aquifer recharge project

The Idaho Department of Water Resources denied the application filed in 2012 by Innovative Mitigation Solutions, a company founded by a former director of the IDWR, to collect 154 cubic feet per second of water during high water from the Big Wood River, channel it to holding ponds where it would seep back into the ground and recharge the aquifer, and then the company would sell the mitigation rights based on the recharge rate to groundwater rights holders to satisfy water calls of senior water rights holders. The denial was based on the company's lack of permission to use the property needed for the project.

Idaho Mountain Express (Sun Valley); October 9

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## Montana center gives Anaconda inventor a place to build

At the open house at the Manufacturing Consortium of Montana at the Mike Mansfield Advanced Technology Center (MSE) near Butte Thursday night, Anaconda inventor Michael Moore provided a demonstration of his patented lift gate for shipping containers, which he ultimately hopes to make in Montana.

Montana Standard; October 9

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## HP teams up with SanDisk to challenge Micron on data storage

A former Micron employee said that Thursday's announcement that Hewlett-Packard Co. was teaming up with SanDisk Corp. to develop new memory devices capable of handling large amounts of data was a direct attempt to compete with the 3D XPoint (pronounced crosspoint) announced by Micron and Intel earlier this year. Micron officials said that technology will be available to certain customers next year, well ahead of the 3-year timeline of the HP-SanDisk product. Micron currently employs 6,000 people in Idaho.

Idaho Statesman; October 9

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## Utah PSC holds 3-day hearing on value, cost of solar power

Utah's largest utility asserts that its net-metering customers who have solar-panel installations on their homes and businesses and feed excess power into the grid, and get credit for that power, are mooching off the system and wants to impose a fee on those customers to level the playing field, and this week, the Utah Public Service Commission heard from a number of experts and the public about the value of solar power.

Salt Lake Tribune; October 9

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## Canada launches 6-year study of oilsands, climate change

Canada is supplying \$2.3 million of the \$2.34 million needed for the six-year study of the effects of climate change and oilsands activity on the Mackenzie River Basin, which covers 20 percent of Canada's land mass, including enveloping waters in



Yukon, the Northwest Territories and the northern parts of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. University of Alberta researchers will lead the study.

Calgary Herald (Edmonton Journal); October 9

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## Water

### Colorado business leaders endorse 'buy-and-grow' water plan

At a meeting Thursday hosted by the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, state and local water officials and business leaders discussed a "buy-and-grow" water plan that would allow agricultural operations more flexibility to share water with cities and towns, and they suggested the proposal be part of the statewide Colorado Water Plan.

Durango Herald; October 9

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## Beyond the region

### Oil prices, Canadian dollar up

On Friday, the per-barrel price of oil was hovering near the \$50 mark, and the loonie traded at 77.37 cents U.S., the highest in two months.

Calgary Herald (Canadian Press); October 9

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### California governor signs bill banning products containing microbeads

On Thursday, California became the latest state to ban microbeads, those miniscule bits of abrasive used in a wide range of products, joining Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland and New Jersey, which have also banned the beads that are showing up in water supplies. California's law is more strict in that it also bans biodegradable microbeads, which other states allow.

New York Times; October 9

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#### **Politics:**

Former Montana governor publishes book on energy revolution

#### **Environment:**

Groups put USFWS on notice of lawsuit over bull trout plan

#### **Economy:**

Colorado group coordinates effort to replace malfunctioning part on 1.5M bicycles

#### **Community:**

Colorado city's rental rates for single-family homes hit a new high

#### **Politics:**

Utah U.S. Rep. Chaffetz a contender in House Speaker race

#### **Environment:**

Montana wildlife commission OK early, late elk hunts



**Environment:**

[Poor food sources put grizzly bears on the prowl in Northern Montana](#)

**Community:**

[Declining sales threatens future of Wyoming community-owned store](#)

**Community:**

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